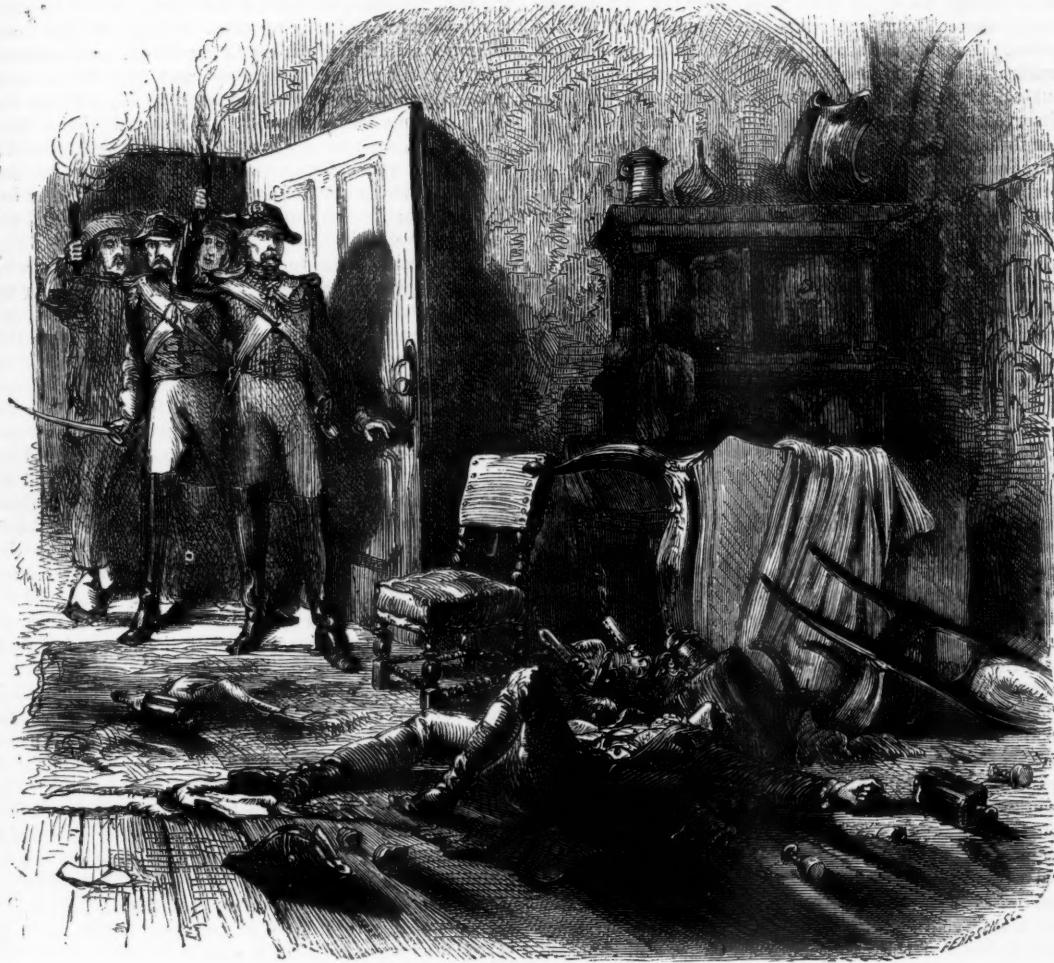


# THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper*.



THE END OF COUNT ST. HENNE.

## THE EXILE'S TRUST:

A TALE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

CHAPTER XI.

ALL that day Jules stayed in the fields. In the evening he despatched his supper quickly, and retired early; but they could hear him walking about in his room long after the rest of the family were in bed. Next day he busied himself about the best room for the ceremony to take place in, and fixed upon the grand saloon of the château, which had to be swept, dusted, and decorated with flowers, under his own inspection; but Jules took

special care to avoid any chance of private conversation with Ninette.

The saloon was decorated, and the day was done. Jean Closnet and his assistants had finished their work in the fields and come in to supper; but the master of house and land was standing alone at the window of his grand saloon, looking out upon the gathering twilight, and trying to think he was doing well. Suddenly a thin hand was laid on his arm, and he started as if from a serpent, though it was only the good old nurse.

"Jules," she said, "I know you don't want me to speak, but I must do it for the sake of the family I

served so long and for your own soul's sake. If you put this place out of your own power to restore to its rightful owners by settling it on Count de St. Renne's wife, as I fear you intend doing to-morrow, I warn you that the sin of perjury and broken trust will cling to you and yours, with all its fearful consequences; and, for the sake of those who loved you best, the good Father Bernard and the noble Sieur, for the peace of your latter years, and for your hope in the world to come, I pray you not to stain your conscience with it."

Jules could not tell that wise and faithful friend the truth, which rose to his lips as she spoke, that the Count would not marry his daughter without the estate; so he gave his shoulders an angry shrug, said old women were always meddling with what they did not understand, darted from the room, and rushed out of the house. Lucelle was standing on the lawn alone in the twilight, too, with her own burden of sad thoughts; but all that day and all the day before, the girl had observed that something he would not speak of troubled her father's mind, and troubled Ninette's also. The good nurse could not tell the daughter of the father's intended perfidy; but Lucelle's perceptions were keen and clear, notwithstanding her youth and innocence, and from chance words and hints dropped in her hearing, she guessed that the trouble had to do with her marriage settlement and her father's estate. When she saw Jules rush out in that strange fashion, a sudden impulse to comfort and counsel him as best she could came upon her, and, running up to him, she threw her arms about his neck, and said—

"Dear father, I will marry the Count to please you. I would do anything in the world for that; but, if there is anything about my dowry that troubles you, or might be wrong, dear father, don't do it, for my sake and for your own."

"My own Lucelle!" cried Jules, clasping her to his heart; but the next moment he loosed his hold, and sped away down the meadows and along the river's side. His mind had not been half so tempest-tossed in that night long ago, when Chamone and his band of red-caps marched him along those same green banks of La Brice, with nothing but the guillotine closing his mental prospect. Then there was fear, indeed, but neither sin nor self-reproach; and now, what was he about to do? To break the covenant made with his earliest friend, and give his own loving daughter, so beautiful, so gentle, and so good, to a man who had been a Terrorist, and a terror to him; who was still the confederate of Citizen Brutus in some dark business about which the country people whispered and surmised, and who would manifestly marry her only for the house and lands of Devigne. It was not too late to break off the match yet; but his foolish ambition, and his more foolish dread of the neighbours' laughter, still returned to prevent that one saving step. In his conflict of thought Jules had turned from the river, and walked, without thinking of his way, till he found himself at the gate of the old churchyard. It was open, and he walked in. The storms of life will rob death of his terrors for a time, even to men who have little hope beyond. "How quietly they sleep there!" thought Jules, as he paused by the green graves in the churchyard; his honest father and mother, the good curé, and poor Philippe Lejune, were at rest beneath the grass, to which spring had given its brightest green; and Jules remembered with a shudder that it was the same season of the year in which he had made in that very spot the compact, which he should break to-morrow in the grand saloon of the château. The twilight had deepened into night

by this time, the full moon was rising above the church-yard trees, and his last thought made Jules turn hastily away; but a rustling sound made him look back. There was a figure that rose slowly from behind the family tomb of the Devignes, and, as the moonlight fell upon its face, Jules saw it was that of the long exiled and missing Sieur. He stood for a minute speechless and paralysed by that most terrible of all emotions—the dread of the supernatural. The spectre was looking straight at him; but for all the wealth in Normandy the strong man could not have moved a step nor uttered a word, till at last he found breath to gasp out, "Is it Sieur Devigne, or what are you?"

"A poor, troubled, sinful mortal, like yourself," said the well-remembered voice of the Sieur, and Jules knew it was the voice of a living man. "Don't be frightened. I did not sail in the luckless 'Fleur-de-lis,' and therefore was not lost with her hundred and fifty French emigrants on the Newfoundland sands. My passage was taken and my berth secured; but I stayed with a friend over night, and, to my great disappointment, the ship sailed with the ebb-tide two hours before her specified time, and left me in London. I got a passage next day in the 'Pearl,' belonging to the same owners, and she reached Quebec in safety; for Providence designed that I should come back to my country. Jules, I have returned empty-handed as I left it, and more so, for my son has gone from me; but life in strange lands, and my own providential preservation, have taught me that we all go wrong in our turns, and very seldom right by our own direction. As I made no fortune abroad, and heard that emigrants might return, I returned too, and the first news I heard in the forest country was concerning you and yours; but I pushed on, reached the old churchyard this evening, and sat down behind my family tomb, which seemed all that was left me, to think what I should do. Jules, the Hand which prevented my sailing in the 'Fleur-de-lis' sent you here this night, that we might meet face to face in the spot where our covenant was made so many years ago. You hold my house and lands by a title which no man can dispute: will you keep that covenant with me, and give them back to me and my son?"

"My noble Sieur, come and take your own again," cried Jules, breaking through the snares which the tempter had set for his feet, in the strength of his better convictions; "come home to the house and lands of your fathers: I give them back to you and yours freely, and with all my heart. Much sin and great sorrow has the Providence which brought us together this night, spared an unworthy man; and yet, Sieur, it was not till I thought you dead."

"Say no more, my first, my last friend," cried Devigne, rushing to him; and the two friends, so long parted and so sorely tried, embraced each other, and wept like children, in the clear moonlight and over the green graves.

"Come home with me," said Jules, when they had in some degree recovered their composure: "there is one sitting by the fireside yonder, who, for all her age and wisdom, would dance for joy to see you."

"Is my faithful Ninette still among the living?" said the Sieur.

"Thank God, she is! and thanks to her for all the good advices which I had not grace to take, and for all the good teaching she gave my daughter Lucelle, Sieur. There is not a better nor a handsomer girl in the whole forest; yet I was going to give her to your enemy, a wicked man, if ever there was one: I know it now as I never did before. And, ah! my Sieur, I sinned against

the child too!" Jules' heart was opened and poured forth all its secrets. "There was a brave young soldier who saved her life from a ravening wolf: he loved my daughter, and I doubt she loved him; but for the sake of that Count I spoke such harsh words to the young man as made him quit my house without a word of leave-taking, and before the break of day. His name was Romane le Norman: have you ever heard of him in all your travels?"

"Never," said the Sieur; "but I know little of soldiers."

"And yet he knew your son, and told us how he had got news of your being lost in the 'Fleur-de-lis.' Ninette has never been the same since she heard it," said Jules.

"That news must have grieved my poor boy too," said the Sieur. "I know not where he is or what has become of him since we parted in anger. Shame on me for being so hasty with him, because he could not take my views of politics—as if the young ever took the views of the old; but I have engaged a friend, who knows something of military life, to inquire after him, and circulate the intelligence of my escape from shipwreck and return to my country, in hopes that it may reach his ears."

By this time they had arrived at the château; all the family were yet astir, and Lucelle stood at the open door, looking out for her father. "Come here, my child," said Jules, "and pay your respects to this gentleman, the best friend I ever had, and never a better than he has proved this night. Wait for me," he continued, in a whisper to the Sieur, "till I break the news to Ninette; her old age is not fit for such a surprise." Lucelle dropped a low curtsy, but the Sieur took her by the hand, saying, "I know you are Dubois' daughter, even by the moonlight, for you have got your mother's face, and there was none fairer in all the forest country but that of my own lost Philippine."

In the meantime Jules had stepped in among the household, as usual assembled in the great kitchen. Ninette sat close by the hearth, with her open Bible on her knees; but, as he came forward, she saw, and so did all the rest, that something uncommon had happened, and every eye said, What is it? Jules endeavoured to look composed, and then said he had got very joyful news.

"Is young Gaston Devigne coming home from the war?" inquired Ninette, eagerly.

"Oh yes, he is, and better than that: there is a stranger outside, who says he thinks the Sieur was not lost in the 'Fleur-de-lis.'"

"Jules, tell me plainly," said Ninette; "is my noble master yet alive? May I say, as Jacob said of his son Joseph, 'It is enough; I shall see him before I die'?"

"That you shall," said Jules, no longer able to play the news-breaker, "for he is just at the door. Come in, my noble Sieur, if it so please you, and welcome back, a thousand times, to your own house and lands, which I have kept for you this many a year."

Before he had well spoken, Devigne entered, leading Lucelle by the hand, and a wild tumult of joyful welcome filled the great kitchen; for most of the household remembered and recognised the Sieur. Ninette could utter nothing for some minutes; but she embraced her long-lost and well-beloved master, and the tears of joy ran down her face like rain; and at last her full heart found utterance in the words of the Psalmist: "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

"Amen, my faithful nurse," said the Sieur; "praise and thanks to Him who brought me through so many

perils by sea and land, back to my country and to the house of my fathers, and, better than all, preserved for me such friends as you and Jules Dubois."

Jules looked down at the ground when these last words were spoken; but by-and-by, when all their minds became more composed—when they had spread a supper for the Sieur, who was tired and hungry, and would sit with the family by the blazing hearth, while Lucelle took on herself the office of waiter—Jules said he hoped the master would excuse him, for he had a little business to settle; and, taking his stout staff in his hand, the forest man set forth without further explanation. He walked at a rapid pace through the village and across the dell, till he reached the gate of Count de St. Renne's castle. Jules had a little business to settle there. The notary was coming from Alençon next day, to draw up the contract between the Count and Lucelle, and settle the Devigne estate on Dubois' daughter. But half an hour in the village churchyard had changed the whole aspect of affairs, and Jules, prudent to the last, determined to avoid the unpleasant exposure of a transaction he sincerely repented, by telling the Count how the case now stood, which he knew would alter Renne's mind regarding the marriage.

He was about to knock at the gate with his staff, but to his surprise found it had not been locked. There was nobody about the courtyard, and neither light nor sound of life in the front part of the castle; but the building was large, and Jules' errand a private one. So he walked on, without ringing the porter's bell or making any other sign of his presence, across the inner court, and through an unfastened door, which admitted him to the half ruined chapel. The Count had made no repairs in that part of his mansion; the night breeze blew through its broken windows; strips of green moss ran up the altar steps, and over the tombs of the St. Renne family. Jules could see everything distinctly by the clear moonlight, and in the deep silence his ear caught sounds of voices somewhere within. As he listened, they grew more distinct, and at length guided him to a narrow door behind a richly-carved stall. It had been once covered with tapestry, but only rags remained, and under them a rusty iron latch, which yielded to Jules' pressure; and he stepped into a narrow passage, so dimly lighted by loop-holes above, that he could only see it was not long, and closed at the farther end by what seemed a solid wall. But a solid wall it was not—Jules could plainly hear the ring of glasses, the clatter of knives and forks, and the conversation of a company in the room beyond. The Count was holding high festival in some apartment of the forsaken wings. All the rumours Jules had heard of nightly doings at the castle rushed on his mind, and tempted him to listen; the voices seemed at his very side, and the first that spoke was a well-remembered one—that of Citizen Brutus.

"So, Renne," said the ex-gaoler—and all the rest seemed to keep silence for him—"you mean to marry the daughter of that stupid peasant I kept so long in the Abbey for you?"

"Yes," said the Count; "the Devigne estate comes with the girl; the settlement and the contract are to be signed to-morrow; fill your glasses, my friends, and drink the bride's health."

"Good," said Lenoir, in a tone of fierce derision; "dispose of us to-night, and get contracted to-morrow. That is doing business; but take that, you traitor!"

There was a long, loud shriek from Renne, followed by another and another, with a mingled sound of blows and imprecations from many hands and mouths, a crash

of glasses, an upsetting of furniture, and then a heavy fall. Jules feared that murder had been done on the other side of that thin partition, and, with as little noise as possible, he made good his retreat from the castle, and ran at full speed to the village. There were lights in many of the houses yet, and he lost no time in giving the alarm; but such was the general misgiving, on account of the strange reports, that not a man would arm and accompany him to see what had become of Count de St. Renne. While Jules was endeavouring to persuade them, however, a body of gendarmes, from Falaise, marched quietly into the village, and he directly made his report to their officer.

"We are going to the castle," said the man of authority. "Honest men of St. Renne, if you mean to maintain public safety and a good government, arm yourselves and come along with us. In that castle a band of coiners have carried on their nefarious trade for almost a year, with the connivance of Count de St. Renne; but either through fear of discovery, or because the business was not sufficiently profitable to himself, he betrayed his companions in crime, and agreed with us on a plan of surprising them this night. It is probable that, by some means or other, they found out his intentions, and have taken vengeance; but make haste, and we will secure the company."

Some of the village men hastily armed themselves, and, taking Jules for their leader, followed the gendarmes to the castle. The latter had keys for every gate and door, and were well instructed in the ways that led to a private apartment behind the chapel, which tradition said had once been occupied by the family confessor, and from its retired situation was thought most suitable for the business and the revels of the coiners; but every gate and every door stood open, and when they reached the room, there lay, beside the overturned table, the corpse of Count de St. Renne, stabbed in many places, and within a few feet of a doorway to the passage in which Jules had stood, covered and filled up with painted canvas.

They searched the castle from turret to vault, but not a living man was to be found, and after vainly scouring the surrounding forest, the officer of the gendarmes shut up the room of death, placed his seal upon the door, secured the outer gates till an inquiry could be held according to law, and returned to Falaise to make his report to the Prefect, while the men of the village went back to their homes to talk over the dark business till far in the night. Jules returned to the château to tell the Sieur and his own family what fate the enemy of their peace had found, almost within the hour which brought back Gaston Devigne to the house of his fathers.

Nobody in all the land lamented Renne, for to none had he been a friend, a benefactor, or a comforter; but all were shocked to hear that a man of his birth and lineage had come to such an end in the ancient castle of his ancestors. That was all that his nearest acquaintances, his intended father-in-law, and his intended bride, could think or say of him. To the latter, his death was a positive release; and Lucelle had never learned the social hypocrisy which obliges people to assume what is thought proper for their position, so she made no greater show of sorrow than the rest. While they sat round the fire talking over the events of the night, almost with open doors—for the neighbours were dropping in one after another to inquire if it were really true that the Sieur Devigne had come back again, all St. Renne being too much excited to think of going to rest—Sentinelle began to bark vigorously.

"It is a stranger," said Jean Closnet: "that sensible dog never barks at one of the neighbours; I'll see who it is," and he sallied out.

The conversation paused, and they heard a voice at the outer door say in hurried accents, "Good evening, Jean. Is Mademoiselle Dubois married yet?"

"No, nor like to be," said honest Jean; and they heard no more.

Lucelle turned first redder than any rose, and then paler than any lily, while Jules rushed out crying, "Monsieur le Norman, I should know your voice among a thousand, and I want your pardon for my hasty words the last night you were here. Come in and make friends with me again, like a brave soldier and a good Christian." Jules said something more, which they could not catch, and the stranger's reply was in a still lower tone; but in another minute Romane le Norman had stepped in, and the Sieur had sprung from his place beside the fire. The one exclaimed, "My son! my own Gaston!" the other cried, "My dear father!" and the long separated parent and child rushed into each other's arms.

It was some time before they could explain, or the family and neighbours comprehend, that Romane le Norman, the young soldier who had saved Lucelle's life, and who now wore the uniform of a captain of chasseurs, was none other than Gaston Devigne, the Sieur's son and heir. "I changed my name," he said, "to spare my father the disgrace, as he and his emigrant friends thought it, of my serving in the Republican army. After the false news of his death reached me, I determined never to reclaim my family name or title, but came here in the midst of my great sorrow, to see how the old place looked before I sailed with my regiment for Egypt. On my way through the forest I had the good fortune to get acquainted with the Dubois family; they know how I came to the château, and Jules Dubois knows how and why I left it."

"I always thought he did," said Ninette, weeping for joy as much to see the son and the father reconciled as she had done for the Sieur's return, "and my heart always warmed to the boy I nursed, though my old eyes could not know him through the change of years and the soldier's trim. Our Lord be praised that I have lived to see him come back to his father's heart and home."

"I am sure if I had known I should never have been so stiff with you, Master Gaston;" and Jules was getting rather confused in his apology, when the Sieur stopped him with, "Never mind, my good Jules; if we had all known many things we would have acted differently, and that should teach us to overlook each other's mistakes; but we will talk of the matter between you and my son in the morning."

They had no time to talk, the family being unusually late in meeting at the breakfast-table next morning. The neighbours were still dropping in to make out the wondrous news of Devigne's return, and among them came a small spare man mounted on a mule, and dressed in a suit which seemed to have been made before the Revolution. "Is this the house of Jules Dubois?" he said, stopping at the door, but making no attempt to alight. "My name is Foquette; I am a notary from Alençon, and was engaged to draw up a contract of marriage here; but I understand something extraordinary has happened."

"That there has," said Jules; "something extraordinary indeed; and I am sorry you should have come so far for nothing."

"Monsieur le Notary has not come for nothing," cried the Sieur. "Jules, my good friend, there are two young

people waiting to be contracted here; if they get your consent, they shall have mine; why should not this worthy notary draw up a contract between my Gaston and your Lucelle?"

"It is more than I deserve," stammered Jules; "but she is a good daughter, and she will make a good wife—that is all I can say."

The contract was drawn up accordingly, by the notary engaged by Count de St. Renne, and signed by willing hands, for their hearts went with them.

On the same day the Juge de Paix and his assistants held an inquiry regarding the death of the Count, but could discover nothing more than that he had been probably murdered by the coiners, who, in the disguise of servants, had lived and carried on their business in his castle. They made out the *procès verbal* accordingly, and one of the returned emigrants, an old abbé, and a distant relation of his mother, laid Leon de St. Renne in his family vault below the half-ruined chapel. He was the last of his line, and his honours and possessions, such as they were, devolved on the Devigne family. They never assumed the title to which its last bearer had done so little credit; but they were henceforth reckoned the most influential proprietors in the forest country.

The contract between Gaston and Lucelle was in due time followed by a wedding, with festivities as fine as ever the neighbours expected from Jules Dubois. Before they were finished the Sieur had regained his early popularity with the forest people. His long exile had wiped out the resentments of the Revolution time, and taught himself the folly of holding too fast by old and decayed institutions; and his choice of a peasant's daughter for his son's bride assured the peasantry that he had come back no aristocrat. Young Gaston, having learned that there were better things in life than a soldier's laurels or a leader's fame, retired from military service to the care of his paternal estate and the blessings of domestic peace. Jules also retired; but it was from the château to his own old farmhouse, with his faithful Closnets and Claude Lomette. The highest of his earthly hopes had been fulfilled. Lucelle was a lady of the land; and it was allowed by better judges than her father, that the good sense and amiable disposition of Madame Devigne well made up for the want of early opportunities. She never forgot her obligations to Ninette; and the good nurse spent her last years in great comfort at the château. The Dubois and the Devignes lived like one family, though they occupied separate houses. It was a common custom of the old heads, as the villagers called the Sieur, Jules and Ninette, to meet at each other's firesides, and talk over the past. On those occasions Jules was in the habit of winding up his reflections by asserting that it was much harder work to be a gentleman than a peasant, and by thanking Providence for bringing him with clean hands out of the trials and temptations of the Exile's Trust.

#### "THE HAVEN WHERE THEY WOULD BE."

##### ANOTHER SEA STORY.

On land, on sea, the evening shades abide;  
The waves grow rougher with the fading light,  
Till all is dark, save on the brown rock's side,  
Where beaten foam gleams white.

The yellow beach is narrowing toward the cliff,  
The boats are drawn up high upon the sand,  
No fisherman are there—to-night no skiff  
Will dare to leave the land.

They mend their nets beside their firesides warm,  
The little children climbing on their knee;  
They sing, to please them, songs of wind and storm,  
And dangers on the sea.

Careless of rain, of darkness, or of chill,  
A woman watches in the cliff's dark shade,  
Listening until her very heart is still,  
Of its own beats afraid.

She watches for her husband's coming home,  
She listens for the keel upon the shore;  
The minutes pass, and still he does not come;  
She hears nor voice, nor oar.

"Twill be a fearful night, for even now  
The storm is gathering its force amain;  
Upon the sea the ships, from stern to prow,  
Shudder, and bend, and strain.

The sailors say no open boat can live  
In such a sea; she thinks, in her despair,  
That all of happiness her life can give  
Is drifting helpless there.

There, 'mid the sullen ocean, in the waves,  
Her fear can see her husband and her boy,  
Struggling alone amid the opened graves  
Of every hope and joy.

All her sick heart doth helpless fear oypress,  
Terror in every wind and wave is heard;  
She finds no refuge for her feebleness,  
No help in deed or word.

She thinks of things that happened long ago,  
Of words her sailor spoke before they wed,  
Of evening walks when tides were running low,  
And sunset skies were red;

Of their first child, whose coming made life fair,  
Annie, who died when she was hardly two,  
And left them but the curl of golden hair,  
And the frayed, tiny shoe;

Of Johnny, her brave boy—her fisher lad—  
So like his father, always at his side;  
She minds the pleasant words and ways he had,  
Her comfort and her pride.

She thinks how bright and warm her cottage home,  
The firelight dancing on the window pane,  
To welcome back the two who may not come  
To meet her smile again.

They kissed her but this morning at the door;  
She let them go without or dread or tears;  
And can it be shall she not see them more  
Through all the weary years?

Her husband knows she loves him and the boy;  
And yet she might have been a better wife,  
Have made his home more peaceful, with more joy  
Have filled his toilsome life.

• Sobbing she knelt upon the sand and prayed  
(And felt not that the storm had wet her through),  
"Thou at whose word once winds and waves were stayed,  
Have pity on us too.

"Have pity; thou wert Son to mother dear;  
Listen, although I cannot pray aright;  
They tell me thou art good, and ever near,  
Oh send us help to-night!

"Thou know'st the perils of the stormy deep,  
Thou know'st the watch upon the lonely shore;  
Those who are sore beset do thou, Lord, keep  
And bring safe home once more.

"And if my prayer in anything be wrong,  
Then let me suffer, only help their need;  
For they are feeble and thy hands are strong—  
For them, for them, I plead."

All night she watched, all night she prayed and wept,  
Till the slow morning shivered in the east,  
Till the grey light o'er land and water crept,  
And the fierce tempest ceased.

Scant comfort came to her with breaking morn;  
It only showed her, strewn on every side,  
Pieces of shivered wood and cordage torn,  
Washed landward by the tide.

Close to her feet there lay a broken oar,  
His name, her husband's, carved upon the blade,  
And now she knew that she had hoped before,  
By this sign hopeless made.

Again she looked, and sudden horror froze  
Her senses and benumbed her speech:  
In the white waves a corpse in sailor's clothes  
Fast drifts toward the beach.

Another wave had borne it o'er the space  
Between them; but she rushed into the sea,  
Seized the loose dress, and looked upon the face—  
Thank God, it was not *he*.

It was the corpse of one she never knew;  
Poor, so she judged; the hands were worn and rough,  
And the torn jacket of the sailor's blue  
Was made of coarsest stuff.

Yet his a noble face, albeit scarred  
By many a battle on life's sternest field;  
He lay at rest upon his pillow hard  
As conqueror on his shield.

Close to his heart a little child was strained,  
His arms had only clasped more fast in death;  
The woman listened till the silence pained,  
To catch or sign or breath;

Then drew them higher from the advancing wave;  
And as she stooped to take the little child  
From the true heart which could not warm or save,  
She almost thought he smiled.

Up the steep pathway of the cliff she ran,  
And told the people, though with broken speech,  
That the dead body of a fisherman  
Was washed upon the beach.

Within her empty cottage, on the bed  
She laid the little child, and tried a space  
To call back life, if 'twere not wholly fied,  
To that small childish face.

But still the heavy lids remained unstirred,  
The little mouth was firmly locked from breath,  
And in the silence, without sign or word,  
The sleep passed into death.

The woman kissed the sweet untroubled brow,  
Which should for ever more be undefiled,  
Then spoke: "The house is empty for me now,  
Of both good man and child;

"So let them bring the corpse from off the shore,  
And lay it by the babe upon the bed;  
They shall not need be parted any more,  
Nor weep again," she said.

"So let him lie in calm and safe repose;  
But for me, neighbours, I would be alone,  
To weep my tears and make my moan for those—  
The dear ones who are gone.

"For my great sorrow you, too, sorrow feel;  
But leave me quite alone awhile, good friends;  
Only God's voice can speak the words that heal  
An anguish which he sends."

The day, the night, another day had fled;  
Untouched by death or life the evening came,  
And over a still sea the sunset shed  
A flash of sudden flame.

A boat came through the light across the waste,  
From whose sharp prow the sparkling water parts;  
Swiftly it came, as strong arms pulled in haste,  
Impelled by eager hearts.

The coastguard on the cliff, with his long glass  
Watching, had almost dropped it in surprise:  
"Well, here's some news to tell his wife, poor lass;  
She'll scarce believe her eyes.

"For who'd expect to see dead folks alive?  
Why, the whole village saw the broken boat,  
And here they are, and look as like to thrive  
As any craft afloat."

The boat was seen, the village was astir,  
And the kind neighbours ran with joyful strife;  
Each would be first to tell the news to her,  
The sorrowing, lonely wife.

Her heart, which had not broken for the pain,  
Was nigh to break with joy; she stood, nor moved  
Until she knew the accustomed steps again,  
And heard the voices loved;

Until her husband drew her to his breast;  
Until her boy was clinging round her neck,  
Laughing, "Now all your fears are set at rest,  
Our boat's not like to wreck."

Then hand in hand they sat them down to tell  
And hear the story of the peril past,  
How the strong boat had faced the billows' swell,  
And wrestled with the blast;

Until one oar was drifted overboard  
By a fierce wave that broke on the boat's side:  
And then they gave up hope, and prayed the Lord  
To keep her if they died.

They scarcely could remember any more;  
They watched, and thought that morn would never come.  
At length it broke, but showed no glimpse of shore,  
Nor any sign of home.

At eve they drifted landward; fishermen  
Forced them to draw their boat upon the sand  
And rest that night, lent them an oar, and then  
They pushed again from land.

When all their peril and her fear were told,  
They rose and stood in silence by the bed,  
While reverently they looked upon the cold  
Still faces of the dead.

And then the father read that solemn psalm  
Which tells how wind and sea obey God's will:  
"He speaketh, and the storm becomes a calm,  
The waves thereof are still."

Slowly he read, and paused as if in thought—  
"Listen, and hear these words again," said he;  
"So are they all into the haven brought,  
The port where they would be."

"Dear wife, I'm thinking that these words I've read  
Are almost new to-night, and yet I know  
I've spoken them in church, and heard them said,  
But let their meaning go.

"And I am thinking that it may be so  
With other words we've often read as well;  
There may be more beneath them than we know,  
A depth we cannot tell.

"Until God turn the light of our own life  
Upon them, as the lighthouse on the sea,  
We'll be content to wait awhile, dear wife,  
And trust in God," said he.

"We stand alive, and look on that dead face,  
And yet God's word is true and faithful still;  
The tempest fell on them, but through his grace  
It has not worked them ill.

"In tender peace on brow and lip sent down,  
I read the impress of a soul at rest,  
And dare not doubt God knew him for his own,  
And called him to his breast.

"For ever he is gathering round him there—  
Made pure and white through Christ's dear charity—  
All those who look to him in faith and prayer,  
To rest eternally.

"In the green churchyard, on the high cliff's crest,  
Where the fierce raging of the winter wave  
Shall beat in vain, and leave them still at rest,  
They two shall share one grave.

"And we will have the words cut on the stone  
Which I have read this evening from the psalm;  
For we must trust that now their port is won,  
Their storm become a calm.

"A little longer we may drift at sea,  
A little longer in the gloom and shine;  
There is a haven, dear, that waiteth me,  
That waiteth me and mine.

"And as we come and go and cast our net,  
The boy and I, and as you watch on land,  
Trust us to Him who never can forget,  
Nor loose his guiding hand.

"And we will take him always for our guide,  
Will trust in him, and thank him evermore,  
Sure that all they who 'neath his care abide  
Are safe on sea, on shore.

"So let us kneel and thank him for the storm  
Through which we saw our Saviour on the sea,  
Heard his strong voice, and looked upon his form,  
And knew that it was he."

## TRAVELLING IN INDIA.

"THE snort of the iron horse has been heard." Such was the language used by a leading Indian journal, in making the gladsome announcement that a line of railway had at length been opened in our eastern possessions. Some years previously, when the project was first mooted, a mirthful periodical had inserted a cartoon, designed to represent the "Grand Jungle-Junction Railway" in full operation; the point of the joke, if we rightly remember, being that a tiger was represented as sitting on its hind legs in the middle of the line, busily engaged in reading a placard to this effect: "Any one found trespassing on the railway will be fined £5." [It should have been fifty rupees, to make it more Indian-like.] Now many of the Indian cities and towns are connected by railways, and the system has been fairly inaugurated which has conferred so many benefits on all civilised lands.

Those are best fitted to appreciate the great stride in advance which has lately been made who have had practical experience of the old methods of travelling. Nay, why should we call them old? they still flourish everywhere except on a few favoured lines, and will doubtless hold their own in the remoter parts of the great Indian peninsula for generations to come. Some of these methods of travelling it is the object of the present article to describe.

We remember once reading of a case in which the passengers on board an American steamer were thrown into a state of excitement by discovering on the label of a portmanteau the name of one of their poets, known wherever the English language is spoken. They thought it a shame that one so distinguished should be allowed to remain incognito, and therefore at once requested the captain to "trot out Longfellow;" nor could they be pacified till they learned that the person on board who bore that honourable name was not the poet, but a prosaic character totally unknown to fame. We would take the liberty of borrowing the American phrase, and shall, without more ado, "trot out the elephant," for the reader's delectation. Nay, do not, we beseech you, accuse us of designing to discourse learnedly on the natural history of the well-known animal just named; we shall contemplate him solely as a beast of burden whereon one may ride. "Some gentlemen and ladies are going through the native city, and they are anxious that you should accompany them, and explain everything." Such an invitation is of course courteously accepted; at the proper time an elephant appears; and by-and-by all is ready for what, in sporting phrase, may be called "the mount." The native elephant-drivers practise a method of ascent unromantic but efficient. To be plain, they simply lay hold of the animal's tail, and pull themselves up with it till they reach a sufficient height to seize one of the ropes tied along the elephant's back, aided by which, they are soon where they desire to be. Of course this method of ascent is too undignified for a European gentleman, and is wholly out of the question with a European lady; for these, the ladder represented in the woodcut is provided, and is perfectly effective for the end proposed. Nay, many an elephant is complaisant enough to put his trunk around his keeper's waist, and hand him carefully up to the elevation he seeks to attain. Sometimes long seats, like benches without the legs, are firmly fixed on either side from the stem to the stern of the animal. Three or more people may be accommodated along each of these, sitting back to back. But by far the more comfortable method of equipping an elephant is to erect on his back a carriage-

like structure called a *howdah*, as is seen in the figure. If one would survey a great part of London in a short time, and without incurring much expense, let him seat himself on the top of an omnibus which has to travel a considerable way, and when it reaches its destination, and he is compelled to bid it a reluctant adieu, let him lose no time in mounting another. What an omnibus is to a London visitor, that an elephant is to one wishing to explore an oriental town. It elevates him above the turmoil of the streets, and affords him a serene and philosophic elevation, whence he may look down on the complex drama of life enacting below, or, if he aspires higher, may survey the dwellers in second storeys, without their being able to say him nay. Notwithstanding, for our own part we prefer pedestrianism, if one wishes for thorough investigation. If a person really desires to know an oriental city, let him trudge on foot through its streets and alleys, even though, among other obstacles to progress, he may meet, as we have done, in a narrow lane, an elephant gaily advancing, with his tail swinging like a pendulum from side to side, and rendering it probable that the explorer will receive from it in passing a blow, as from a rope's-end, the exact sensation of which, with all his ardour in the pursuit of science, he would rather, if permitted, forbear to know. It has not been our lot to ride through any part of India on a camel, though we have had one accompanying us to carry baggage. The soil is not sandy enough to bring camels into general use for travelling.

An idea extensively prevails in this country, that when wealthy Europeans in India travel by palanquins, it is because they think it luxurious to be borne, not by animals, but by their fellow-men. In reality, it is because in certain circumstances they cannot do better than they submit to what is in many respects a very vexatious mode of progression. A little explanation will make this plain. A gentleman is appointed to a lucrative office, which he wishes to take up without delay. He desires to get over the 500 miles of ground which intervene between him and his new sphere of labour in as brief a time as possible. Unhappily there is no railway, and the roads are so bad that he cannot use a wheel carriage; and he has not physical strength enough to gallop under a tropical sun with relays of horses, like the hardened Mohammedan who rode Henry Martyn to death; while, if he confined himself to one horse, he would be too long in reaching his destination. It is therefore needful for him to engage a palanquin, and arrange that relays of bearers shall await him at fixed points. Immediately his troubles begin. Wages are regulated by demand and supply; but, as in the case of cabmen in this country, the Government prescribes a fixed rate, which the palanquin-bearers are entitled to charge. It is impossible to keep it from fluctuating to some degree; and, notwithstanding the rate, any extra demands for palanquins by a certain fixed law make the charges rise, as, indeed, it is right that they should do. There is thus frequently an altercation before a bargain is made. But suppose this not to occur—nay, more, let it be so that the traveller has had everything arranged for him by the local Government, which has issued orders that twelve bearers and a man to carry a torch shall be awaiting him at a village ten miles from his station at midnight, and as many more at a place twenty miles off at two o'clock, and yet again as many thirty miles off at four o'clock, and so on, day and night, with brief intervals, till the whole 500 miles are provided for. Suppose, moreover, that he has received a paper telling him the exact sum which he is required to pay each company of bearers on the line

of route, he has not yet reason to congratulate himself that danger is past. Perhaps, after he has gone five miles, he suddenly discovers that six out of the twelve men whom he at the outset hired, and who would not move till he gave them half their pay in advance, have

stout gentleman was of a very forbearing temper, and he waited half an hour to see whether the journey would be resumed; but no preparations were made for a fresh departure. He therefore put his head out of the palanquin, and, addressing the bearers in their native



BULLOCK-CARRIAGE.

vanished, and the rest, complaining that they are too few to convey him, lay him down every few miles till they take a rest. He is therefore unpunctual on reaching his first halting-place, and has there to pay what is called demurrage, and to repeat the same fine (extorted from him by the delinquency of the men he engaged) at other fifty stations before reaching his destination. It is a very unpleasant thing to feel one's self dependent on the honesty of 600 bearers of average heathen fidelity, and somewhat annoying to learn that those who do not at all understand the circumstances attribute it to a love of barbaric pomp that their friend has employed men rather than animals to carry him, while they, accustomed to sit, when they travel, in comfortable railway carriages, congratulate themselves that they have not such luxurious tastes as he.

A good and, we believe, a true story is current in India about a Christian gentleman of somewhat formidable bulk, who was travelling in a palanquin. He happened to know Teloogoo, the language of the bearers, though they were not aware of the fact, as it was unusual for Europeans to learn that tongue, Hindooostanee being more useful to them in their wandering life. Oppressed by the burden they carried, the bearers began to flag in their exertions; and at last one said to the rest, in Teloogoo, "Suppose we were to lay this great fat hog down." It was no sooner said than done. The palanquin, with the "hog" inside, was deposited next instant on the ground, and those who had carried it squatted down beside it, and began to smoke. The

Teloogoo, mildly said, "Suppose that you were now to take the great fat hog up again."

"Ah, luckless speech and bootless boast,  
For which he paid full dear,"

says Cowper of his immortal equestrian hero; and most unhappy was the effect of the gentle hint given to the bearers; for, fearing that he would lose temper, and beat them for having called him a hog, they fled from the place in hopeless panic, leaving the gentleman far from human habitations, and with no person to carry him at all.

A great deal of the travelling in India is performed on horseback. In the hills horses are sometimes made to give assistance in another way to the explorer; for, instead of mounting on the back of a steed, he simply seizes its tail, which, after proper training, it permits him to do without ungraciously giving him a kick. Thus he can continue on foot, and examine whatever is presented to him, and yet not be solely dependent on his own exertions in climbing the toilsome steep.

We come at last to our own pet method of travelling—we mean by bullocks yoked to a two-wheeled carriage. Why two-wheeled? asks some reader. This is the reason. Because through a great part of India the roads are in the most wretched state, and, worse than all, there are no bridges; but the traveller is expected to ford every river, except a very few of the first magnitude, crossed by ferry-boats. Suppose that some inexperienced person committed the mistake of starting on an expedition

with a four-wheeled bullock-carriage, he would be in danger of falling into a very awkward difficulty. Let it be supposed that he has come to a brook four feet in breadth, and with the banks on either side two feet in height, and perpendicular. A two-wheeled carriage would gallantly plunge in, turn in the water, go down

must come and see me," said an oriental banker to two Europeans. "I will send my conveyance for you." So we promised to go, and in due time the wealthy man's "conveyance" arrived. It consisted in the main of a plank of wood with wheels attached. The plank of wood the two of us bestrode. Our feet, as we sat one



A STATE ELEPHANT.

the stream, and emerge again wherever a gentle slope could be found. Not so a four-wheeled carriage. The first two wheels would go into the water, after which it would be found that there was not room to get the others in, or these out, and the bullock-carriage then and there would probably come to grief. If the reader has ever to travel in India, or indeed in any oriental country in a carriage, let him take our advice, and not venture beyond two wheels.

Bullock-carriages are in extensive use in the East, and are of various degrees of dignity. That figured on the preceding page is quite of a patrician character. Not every Hindoo traveller has such a canopy over his head, or bullocks so well-to-do, or such modern-looking wheels, though the utility of the conveyance is in our view much abridged by these being four in number. Most of the vehicles seen in the East among the native population fall far short of that now described. "You

behind the other, were firmly planted against the axle-beam, and with our hands we grasped upright pegs strongly fitted into sockets for the purpose. People in civilised lands, who are on their way to the gallows or the guillotine, are provided with more dignified carriages. Still it was wonderful how quickly we rattled along; for the animals, though lean kine, were by no means destitute of stamina, and we could not have believed, on any other evidence than that of experience, that it would be possible for us, as we did, to run up a steep hill by a wretched pathway roughened by projecting rocks. If, however, the animal had tumbled backwards, or the pegs by which we held had slipped from their sockets, dire might have been the calamity that would have ensued.

It is not, of course, of such a vehicle as that now described that we are enamoured: it is of one vastly superior to this in character. If comfort is sought, then a carriage should be made as light as possible, much on

the model of a cab, or of a gentleman's carriage here, and of dimensions sufficiently ample to allow two travellers to lie down full length if they feel so inclined. To facilitate this, a board should be provided to fill up the gap between the opposite seats, so that the interior of the carriage may be made a bedroom by night and a sitting-room by day. Then all that is needful is to provide relays of bullocks, and long journeys may be made much more satisfactorily, though not so fast as by palanquin. Once more: as there is not a village in all India that has not a certain number of bullocks in it, the traveller can fearlessly go into the most unexplored places, sure that he will be able, for a trifling sum, to hire the animals he requires, and be borne pleasantly forward on his way. Of course nothing in this world is perfect, and bullocks (must we confess it?) have their failings. They are not bright in intellect, and they are far from energetic in character. What a seaman would call two knots an hour is all that they will accomplish if left to themselves; and they need hints to move faster to be very broad indeed before they think of reducing them to practice. Then there is a very odd mistake they are apt to make. Being naturally obliging when it does not give him too much personal inconvenience, a bullock no sooner reaches one of the long steep inclines that lead to Indian rivers than he obviously reasons in such a fashion as this:—"The inclined plane in front of me affords me an excellent opportunity of retrieving my character for activity. I have neglected six admonitions to move faster; but here it will cost me so little trouble to run instead of walking, that without more ado I launch away." And at the very place where an animal of intellect would move slowly and cautiously, he careers wildly forward. He has not studied the law of accelerated motion, and is not aware that if he do not restrain himself he will go on, with continually augmenting speed, till he either falls, with the bullock-carriage on the top of him, or, on the more favourable side of the alternative, goes with loud splash into the water, still keeping his feet. How often have we heard that splash with pleasure, as knowing that it indicated that we could not descend any farther, and that, consequently, the danger of an upset was past! Two bullocks, paid for at a higher rate than others, as remarkable for self-restraint, commenced to give us a run on a road which zig-zagged along the front of the awful precipices which exist throughout so large a part of the Western Ghauts, and we had to dismiss them forthwith, and employ men to take their place. Another fault bullocks have: being of inert temperament, they fondly hope when you start that you mean to make your journey brief, and rush madly at the first open gate they see; nay, sometimes even at a shut gate, as a hint to you that you had better call on the family resident inside, and then return home. We have sometimes required a man with a stick to take his station at gate after gate and fiercely defend each, else would the bullocks that bore us have made us call at every house that we passed.

Need it be said that all classes in India most gladly change the modes of travelling to which they have been accustomed, for the comfort, the speed, and the economy of the railway system? Even those supposed to love palanquin travelling, from the connection it has with barbaric pomp, feel it a happy relief to be rid of it for ever, and see its place supplied by railway trains; for the humblest steam-engine on the line would be ashamed to lay down a hog, however fat. And if it smokes, at least it smokes to some purpose, and, while thus engaged, does not sit squatted on the ground, but hurries forward with breathless haste all the while upon its way.

### BELVEDERE INSTITUTION.

A HOME FOR DISABLED AND WORN-OUT MERCHANT SEAMEN.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER.

MANY are the palatial homes which are scattered over the length and breadth of old England. Some, rich in historic associations, are still warm with the breath of human life, and the glow of the family fireside; and some, too far gone for safe habitation, are still preserved as they used to be in former times; as though their owners would have them perish, when their time has come, surrounded with the associations, and, it may be, possessed of some lingering traces of the beauty of their youth. We remember being much struck with the strong affection thus shown for a fine old manor-house by its proprietors. The old home had become absolutely unsafe as a place of residence, but they had no heart to pull it down; and its owners built themselves a house hard by, where they lived almost as it were under the shadow of the old home.

Famous, however, as England is for the palace homes of olden time, she promises to have still brighter fame for palace homes which are being reared now upon her soil. These are the homes of the afflicted, the aged, those stricken in body or mind. They are palaces in extent and beauty; they are homes in the home-like comforts they provide, and the home-like care which they afford.

There are many such homes in existence, but England has room for and need of more; and not only so, but she has ample wealth wherewith to erect and endow them, and charity large enough to originate them. Calls come from all sides; and by degrees these calls make themselves heard; and, it may be, at first, with feeble utterance a response is made, but the public voice becomes gradually louder and stronger, until the need is nobly met.

Recently a new palace home has started into existence, "A home for worn-out or disabled sailors of the mercantile marine;" and we gladly chronicle its birth in these pages, hoping not only to interest our readers in their leisure hour, but to be the means, perhaps, of stirring up their interest in the poor worn-out old British tar, who has many a leisure hour, which, instead of being spent in misery and neglect, may, through the instrumentality of such an institution as this, be passed in happiness and peace.

The sailor was not only neglected in former times, but he knew it, and this very knowledge helped to make him reckless. Jack never thought of saying, "Well, if nobody cares for me, I'll take care of myself;" and so he lived on, rich to-day, and beggared to-morrow; toiling months on the waters, to become a fatter victim for the harpies who were ready to devour him when he came ashore; appearing for a few days at intervals, and then disappearing, it may be, for months or years; dying often amongst strangers abroad, and not seldom amongst strangers in workhouses at home. It was not without reason that Colonel Thompson said in the House of Commons, that "there was not so unprotected an animal on the earth, or in the waters under the earth, as a British seaman." About three thousand of them are now believed to be inmates of our various workhouses; and perhaps it is not too much to say that, had the institution of which we are about to give a sketch been in working order some years ago, many of these poor fellows would now be honoured inmates of its walls, or recipients of its out-pensions, if they have families or friends with whom they can live.

The Belvedere Institution comes of a good stock. It

is the offspring of the "Shipwrecked Mariners' Society," and promises to be the worthy child of a worthy parent. A man need not be a sailor to trace how close is the family likeness between the two. The "Shipwrecked Mariners' Society," from which this Institution springs, had itself, thirty years ago, no existence. It is now represented on every part of the coast of the United Kingdom; relieves in the aggregate 11,000 persons annually; and is supported by about 70,000 subscribers, of whom 50,000 are blue-jackets. Finding the Institution rapidly increasing in usefulness to the merchant seamen and their families, the Committee of Management obtained an Act of Incorporation in 1850; and, being impressed with the feeling that the Society was left the only representative of the mercantile marine of the empire, in consequence of the entire failure of the Merchant Seamen's Fund, which was ordered to be wound up by Act of the Legislature, the Committee, looking forward to a time when they might be in a position to set on foot a provision, and places of refuge in different parts of the country for worn-out merchant seamen, somewhat similar to Greenwich Hospital, obtained a clause in the Act of Incorporation, authorising them to build asylums for this purpose. In course of time the "Shipwrecked Mariners' Society" found themselves, by God's blessing, in a position to vote £5,000, to head a subscription for this long-desired object. They therefore organised a public meeting, at which the Lord Mayor took the chair; and, by way of a beginning, determined that an effort should be made to establish an hospital for the reception of 500 persons of all grades of the mercantile marine, and that the wives of a certain number of each grade should be admitted under certain regulations. It was also proposed that a hospital should be built on or near the banks of the Thames, in the port of London, to be called, with her gracious Majesty's permission, "The Royal Hospital for Worn-out and Disabled Merchant Seamen." In order to meet the feelings of all, it was suggested that out-pensions should be provided for those who had a home of their own, and preferred remaining in it.

In sketching out this plan of operations, the Committee kept in view a very important point, and one which, we doubt not, will contribute greatly to winning the favour of the public for this Institution. They determined to throw themselves not only upon the general public, but particularly upon the seafaring men themselves. They thought there was nothing like making Jack take himself in tow. It was determined, therefore, that seamen should be invited of their own free will to subscribe towards providing themselves with a pension, and the maintenance of the new Institution; and that their subscriptions should make them eligible for their admission into the hospital, subject to the rules of the Institution. All was to be voluntary; and this, of itself, was like asking Jack to sail with both wind and tide. Jack was to enter into a kind of partnership with the public, and to have a share in this big ship, if it could be set afloat. As an idle mind is, according to the old proverb, the devil's workshop, the Institution was made to possess an industrial ward; so that the inmates of their asylum should have suitable occupation, if they felt inclined to work, in making various canvas articles, mats, etc.; and those who earned the profits were to have them. The married women were to be employed as much as possible in the domestic arrangements of the establishment; and every ward was to consist of a certain number of cabins under the command of two master mariners, one of whom was to have the rank of first, and the other of second captain.

This was the origin of the Institution, and, springing, as it does, from the "Shipwrecked Mariners' Institution," it is only one more proof of the multiplying power of good; a fresh lesson to us that, when we start anything good, we do not know how much good we are doing; even as, when we start anything bad, we do not know how much mischief it will bring about.

It is one thing to design a big ship, another to build her, yet another to be able to launch her, and, if this be accomplished, yet another to sail her; and the proposed Institution remained simply in its embryo state of design, for a considerable time.

The first public attempt in its favour was made as far back as 1857, when a meeting was convened at the Mansion House, under the presidency of the Lord Mayor (Finnis). This meeting was, so far as it went, successful; many promised their help; and the "Shipwrecked Mariners' Society" headed the list with £5,000; but the Indian mutiny and a violent commercial crisis blighted its prospects for a time. The skeleton of the good ship was, however, now upon the slip, and it was only a question of time as to when her sides should be planked in and she should be launched. At length the time came. In April 1866 another meeting was convened at the Mansion House, at the requisition of upwards of 200 firms and leading gentlemen in the city; and it was determined to proceed vigorously with the undertaking. Fifty thousand pounds it was calculated would be required for the building, and £13,000 per annum for its support. That £50,000 was a formidable sum; and the Institution might still have been on the stocks, had not a happy Providence placed within reach of its friends a building almost exactly suited to them, and in a most suitable locality; it was the right building in the right place.

It was above all things necessary that an Institution of this kind should be on the river. As outward-bound vessels dropped down with the tide, the eye of the sailor would fall upon the flag of the Institution, and he would turn his face to foreign shores with a feeling that, go where he might, there were those who cared for him at home; that, if there were many to fleece the poor tar, there were some also to care for him; that he was worth something, and that he knew people who thought he was worth something; and this would be no small help to keep Jack from throwing himself away. And when the homeward-bound vessels came up with the tide, a sight of the Institution, with the old familiar flag floating in the breeze, would suggest to the mariner that there was a future to be provided for, that he could have a good home in his old days, if he chose now to keep a sharp look-out, and lay by a trifle of the money he would soon receive; in a word, the Institution would, if properly placed, do, by its mere position, a considerable part of its work. Then, who could wish the old sailors, who were inmates of its walls, to be otherwise than surrounded with their old associations? They had been looking on water all their lives, and to put them, in their old age, where they could never see any of the old familiar sights, would be almost like cruelty; so the Thames side was pitched upon as the site of the new hospital. And a site was found in the desired locality in a very curious way. A gentleman was going down the South-eastern line, on behalf of the Institution, to look at a piece of ground which was available for the purpose of the hospital. He met an acquaintance of his, travelling in the same carriage, with whom he entered into conversation, and to whom he told his errand. The latter, who lived at Belvedere, told him that the mansion of the late Sir Culling Eardley, Bart., was in the market,

and was, he believed, to be had moderately; would he come up and take a look at it? The gentleman accepted the invitation, and went to see Sir Culling's house. The moment he saw it he pronounced it the very thing. Belvedere House is situated on the summit of a hill overlooking the Thames, three quarters of an hour by rail from London, and has in it sixty-five rooms, including the attics, with abundant offices. Several of the rooms are thirty feet in length. There are roomy corridors, and altogether, convertible space, without touching main walls, for putting up cabins for at least 160 men; leaving the main entrance floor to be used for dining, reading-rooms, etc. The kitchen and all the other offices are more than equal to the need of 500 men; and, by building wings for dormitories, the full number could ultimately be accommodated. Twenty-four acres of land were to had with the mansion, and the whole could be purchased for a trifle over £12,000. There was no need of going farther. The purchase was concluded, and the building, which originally cost some £60,000, was handed over to the representatives of the new hospital. No unnecessary time was lost; and, in December last, twenty single men were elected as inmates of the hospital, and six married men were elected to pensions at their own homes. One enterprising friend of the Institution started the idea that 100 should be elected at once, and a generous public appealed to, to carry them through; but this was rather startling for those who had the affairs of the Society in hand; and the crew embarked, for the first half-year's cruise, was the above-mentioned twenty-six.

We visited the hospital a short time ago, and found matters much in the same state as they generally are on board a ship when she is getting under way. A portion only of the large building is at present fitted up; and the work is to be done gradually, according as funds come in, and inmates are elected. We first turned our steps to what had been the drawing-room in former times. This is a large apartment with a profusion of gilding on the doors and ceiling, the latter of which is abundantly ornamented with wood carving, as we have already said, gilt—it was thus decorated for a royal visit—and is to be used as a chapel, until some other provision is made for the celebration of Divine service. At present the inmates attend Belvedere Church, and such as belong to the Independent or Baptist communities have an opportunity of attending their respective places of worship, and receiving freely the ministrations and visits of their respective ministers.

To return, however, to our visit to Belvedere House; we found two old men near the drawing-room door, and one of them, taking down the key from a nail, let us in. We asked about the decorations of the room, but our old friends were very misty on the subject. They were done either in the reign of William III or George III; sometimes it was the one, and sometimes the other; indeed, they had a very dim idea as to the relative dates of these personages; they were each "III," and that was something to agree upon at any rate. We were then shown upstairs, where we found well-arranged lavatories, and a number of most comfortable little cabins. The cabins are formed by boarding off the corridor at each side, leaving a passage up the centre, and then dividing the enclosed spaces into small rooms, which go by the names of "cabins," and may, with a very slight stretch of the imagination, pass muster very well as such. As the partitions are all open at the top, excellent ventilation is secured. Here, each man has his own little place to himself, and is, as our Scotch friends very descriptively would say, "self-contained." A striking

contrast do these little private chambers afford to the unhomeliness of the workhouse ward; and our guide, who had himself been taken from a workhouse, must have had experience of this.

The older we grow, the more do we cling to the associations of youth; and we can imagine how pleasant it must be to the aged inmates of this hospital to have these associations thus, as far as possible, retained. It is to be hoped that there is another advantage in this system of separate little cabins. There is here afforded an opportunity for a little privacy for reading and prayer. We were reading the other day of a pious minister whose resources were so narrow that he could not afford to have a separate room where he could withdraw for prayer. He prayed, nevertheless. When he was sitting in a certain seat, and his handkerchief over his face, it was well understood in the family circle that he was holding communion with God, and as little noise as possible was made. And there is reason to believe that our old tars avail themselves of this privilege of privacy; for the secretary, on going through one of the wards unexpectedly, when it was believed that all the men were at breakfast, heard an old sailor earnestly engaged in prayer, begging a blessing on those who had so liberally provided for his and his messmates' comfort in their old age.

After the cabins we visited the kitchen. Here we found a most energetic individual working at high pressure, cooking, chopping, talking, navigating the kitchen apparently single-handed; and evidently the right man in the right place. Our friend had been a seaman (and, indeed, all connected with the Institution are, as far as possible, to have sea claims, the nurses being the widows or near relatives of seamen, etc.), and now he occupied the responsible post of steward in the Institution; but he was evidently no mere hireling. Until things could be put ship-shape, he had taken the cooking into his own hands, and was working away at it with a will; and right wholesome work our energetic friend had cut out for him to do. On Sunday he has to serve up roast beef, potatoes, and plum-pudding; on Monday, vegetable soup, boiled mutton, and potatoes; on Tuesday, salt fish, onions, potatoes, and plain suet pudding; on Wednesday, vegetable soup, boiled beef, and potatoes; on Thursday, roast mutton, green vegetables, and bread and cheese; on Friday, salt pork, pease-soup, and potatoes; and on Saturday soup and bouilli, potatoes, and bread and cheese. On this fare our old friends may comfortably manage to keep under way during the week; and none will grudge it to them who remember how often they have fared hard and gone short in former days.

It will help the public to wish our old friends a successful cruise every week, through these various good things, if we impress upon them the fact that the inmates of the Institution have themselves contributed a considerable sum towards their provision. Indeed, this is one of the most healthy and praiseworthy features about it; and the public should know that they are only invited to supplement the efforts which sailors, under the guidance of their best friends, are making for themselves. Tables were cast for the Society by Mr. Finlayson, the eminent Government actuary, with the following results; and, as experience shows, the sailor is beginning to be alive to his own interest, and avail himself of the chance of doing something for himself.

A seaman under twenty-four years of age can secure a pension of £9 per annum, to commence at sixty years of age, or when permanently disabled, for fifteen shillings a year. For £3 15s. per annum, he can obtain a pension

of £45; and the same advantages are to be had, at a proportionate premium, for every year up to sixty. As it constantly occurs that seamen coming from abroad have considerable sums of money to receive, and that, consequently, the payment of one or the other of the sums for the securing a pension in old age, or if previously disabled, is not only easy to them, but will often be a way of securing it from being either lost or squandered, the tables have been cast so as to make provision for cases of this kind. One payment of £9 12s. 3d., at the age of twenty-four, will secure the pension of £9 at sixty years of age; one payment of £53, at the age of fifty, will do the same. The insurance rate for masters is a trifle more; but it needs only a glance to see how favourable these terms are to both masters and men. Nor are the widows forgotten. Men may subscribe for pensions for their wives from £1 per annum upwards; so that an opportunity is given to the poorest to do the little he can, and to those well off to do the most they can. We remember in our youth seeing pictures of the traditional Black-eyed Susan frantically embracing Jack as he departed for foreign lands, or waving a many-coloured handkerchief to him, as his ship was almost on the horizon; but in this practical age of figures and facts we should like Black-eyed Susan to run her eyes over the Belvedere insurance tables, and direct Jack to do the same; and we shall think none the worse of Susan if she begs Jack not to leave her on the parish, and a great deal the better of Jack if he has provided, so far as he could, like a brave and honest fellow, for "the girl he left behind him."

The other day a man from the Shetland Isles, who paid fifteen shillings a year as insurance for a pension of £9 per annum at sixty years of age, or before, if permanently disabled, came to the secretary after a good voyage, and paid in in one sum £9 12s. 3d., thus making sure of his pension while he had the opportunity. He did it at once, as he himself said, "for fear of falling to leeward," and "to get it off his conscience." A capital thing it is to stir up Jack's conscience about himself. We see, by a case like this, that it is impres-  
sible; and we have no doubt that, wherever the pro-  
spectus of the Institution goes, it will carry this appeal, to some degree, at least, with it. Another old man entered the office, and told the secretary he wanted "to look out for his widow." And how much is contained in these few words of this poor sailor! Many a sailor knows what it is to keep a look-out, and a sharp look-out too, for squalls, and land, and breakers, and all the varied perils of the sea; and he would own that a man who couldn't keep a good look-out was not worth much: but there has been no look-out for the poor wife at home, who has cast in her lot with Jack in all his perils, and who is too often cast, by his improvidence, a widow on the cold world. "Thirty-five pounds five shillings was a deal to pay;" his wife and he were each fifty-three years of age; but—"Sir, I want to have my mind at rest," said the sailor; and where there's a will there's a way; and we doubt not but the honest man will accomplish his purpose, and feel that comfort which a man's conscience gives him, when he knows he has done what is right. Sometimes a sailor will come into the office of the Institution and say, "Beg pardon, sir; but here's half-a-crown towards the Institution: 'tisn't much, sir; but I should like to give it." Another comes and subscribes, and says, "he hopes he may never want the benefits of the Institution himself; he can work on still, though he's old; but he should like to help for others." The first legacy the Institution received was £19 from a mariner; and not many months since a

seaman deposited his will with the Institution, leaving therein £200 as a legacy to the hospital. It will surprise our readers to hear how large a sum of money the unclaimed effects of seamen dying abroad amount to. It was stated at a meeting in Newcastle on behalf of the Institution in 1866, that "the accumulation of wages which fell to the relatives of seamen who died abroad, but which was unclaimed by them, amounted at that time to £94,800 18s. 4d." It is hoped that Government will be induced to apply some of this money to the support of this Seamen's Institution; and, no doubt, it would be a very legitimate application of it. One thing, however, it suggests, and that is, that the sailor should have the advisability of making a little will pointed out to him by his employers. Jack has a horror of lawyers; but he may give the lawyers a wide berth, and make his will nevertheless—two or three lines will do it—leaving his little property to his relatives, if he have any he should help to provide for; and if not, then remembering this Institution, which well deserves his good-will.

The inmates at present in the Institution are all men that have seen good service—forty and fifty years is the usual time—but some have been knocking about for even sixty.

"How often have you been wrecked?" we asked our old friend who was so misty on the subject of George and William III.

"Why, let me see, sir. One, two, three, four, five times, I think, sir."

Well, that was often enough, in all conscience, for any one man; and he, at any rate, was entitled to his cabin in Belvedere for the remainder of his days.

"And how often were you?" we asked another.

"Once in 1825, going to Hamburg; and once in '28, on the coast of Norway; and once in '42, on the coast of Java."

This old fellow was two short of the other in the wreck line, but he amply made up for the deficiency by sea by his performance on the land. Our old friend had but one hand; the other he lost in an encounter with savages, which would have procured him the Victoria Cross in the present day, if in the Queen's service. Going from John's River to King William Town, as escort to a lady, our old friend found himself followed by four Caffres, who had come out of the wood. As they neared him, he saw that they intended mischief; so, dismounting the lady, he made her stand with her horse between her and the savages. A very good move, as matters turned out. When the savages came within thirty yards they prepared to throw their spears, and showed fight in earnest. Our old friend, who had waited to the last moment, in his unwillingness to shed blood, lifted his double gun and shot two of the savages dead, right and left. He then put up his hand to his holster to draw his revolver, when the third savage shot his spear at him, and struck him through the hand. Another shot from the revolver, and he lay dead upon the ground; and the fourth man immediately took to the woods. The hand after some time began to show symptoms of being poisoned, and our friend had to have it amputated; an operation which, according to his own account, he went through without any suffering, owing to the peculiar effect of the poison on the spear.

Our friends may possibly feel alarmed, lest we are about to drift into a sea of "yarns," which have neither bottom nor shore; so we shall draw rapidly to a close.

In the Belvedere Institution we have the nucleus of many similar hospitals which, it is hoped, will be established in various of our seaports. We have a rallying-

point for industry and economy ; we have a final home for the ocean wanderer in his old age, or for the one that has been crippled in the prime of life. Widows will bless this Institution when they are bereaved. Wives will bless it when it saves their husbands' hard earnings from the demon of licentiousness and drink, and makes them thoughtful of their hearth and home. The men themselves taught to respect themselves, will rise above the level to which they have been downpressed ; and our country will gain in being represented by men who have a stake in life, something to work for in their youth and to lean on in their old age. 'Twas but the other day that the old men in the Institution begged for a Union Jack, that they might use it, ship-fashion, as a pall to cover their old comrades as they bore them to the grave ; and this Institution teaches them that what they love to have laid over them in death they must honour as it flies over them in life. So may it be ; and may the influence of Belvedere pervade our mercantile marine, wherever it floats the British flag, and remind Jack that he is a man that has a home—a home which his own honest hands help to support, and to which in his old age he would not carry the memories of a profligate and dishonoured youth.

#### SERVIA.

I.

SERVIA, as McCulloch, a sufficient authority for all such intelligence, informs us, is a mountainous territory about a hundred miles in breadth, and from a hundred to a hundred and sixty in length, and has a population of nearly a million, who occupy some twenty thousand square miles of country, and are Christians of the Greek Church. This is no vast nationality to demand our special historical attention ; but its political importance as "the youngest member of the European family" can hardly be overrated. It is as the borderland between great empires of opposite creeds, and the seat of the protracted struggle between Western civilisation and Oriental despotism—between the Christian and Mohammedan religions—that it has become the pivot on which turn most important points in the great "Eastern Question," a question deeply affecting the present welfare and future prospects of many millions of mankind.

Under these conditions it has struck me as rather singular that the English public should know so little of, and consequently take so little interest in, this part of the world. We talk of "the great Eastern complications" as threatening to involve the world in war. The newspapers tell us, by fits and starts, of the mutable connection between the Porte ("the sick man") and its revolting Pashaliks ; and we hear of constitutions and principalities, and republics, with all their immediately dependent consequences to hundreds of thousands of our fellow-creatures, without attaching anything like a distinct or definite meaning to the news of the hour.

I am well aware that the "Leisure Hour," even if I had the inclination, which I have not, is no medium for political disquisition or polemical controversy, and I therefore content myself with pointing out the broad outlines of the subject. The three principal powers, Austria, Russia, and France (and more remotely Prussia), are nationally concerned to the utmost degree in the solution of the problem—"Shall the dominion of Turkey cease in Europe, and how shall the system be reconstructed?" This is the Eastern Question ; and a wide one it is. The Roman Catholic Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary, with its hundreds of miles of Turkish frontier, is there

face to face with the adherents of Mohammed. The Emperor of Russia (independently of ambition), as head of the Greek Church and religion, acts, throughout every ramification in the Turkish and Danubian provinces, the part of patron and friend in need, whilst his long-oppressed co-religionists in these provinces feel, in every movement, his influence, and rely on his assistance or protection. The native insurrections have never been without Russian countenance, if not stirring up, and help. France, claiming to be the eldest son of the Romish Church, has been equally energetic and universally interfering wherever there has occurred a Roman Catholic difficulty. Protestant England (especially with non-intervention professions) seems to have little to do with the catastrophe, except looking out to see that the partition does not materially injure her position ; and hence, *pro tempore*, labouring to maintain what is called "the balance of power."

Before proceeding, there is one vital distinction involved in this grand drama which ought to be noted. The Mohammedan faith, propagated solely by the sword, must decline when the sword can be no longer employed ; whilst the Christian religion, founded on reasoning and persuasive principles (though too often deformed by bigotry and persecution), must, in the end, prevail over savage ignorance and merciless proselytism. The last two centuries have wonderfully advanced this opinion and worked towards this end throughout Europe ; and even Asia is contracting, rather than enlarging, the field for the Moslem dominancy and increase. The power it possessed, and yet possesses, was founded on conquest, and has been gradually circumscribed, though the rights of autonomy, or sovereign supremacy, continue to overshadow many noble efforts for deliverance from the yoke. Already has Greece and the Ionian Republic become independent. Egypt is virtually the same. Crete is struggling in the same cause, and Servia, to which I return, has just achieved another settlement more liberal than any of its preceding compromises with the Turk. Often have the Ottomans managed to crush insurrections ; but it has become evidently impossible that their repressive policy can be repeated, and a new distribution of dominion be staved off.

Scattered here and there over the face of the earth, and chiefly in south-eastern Europe, there are (including Russia) above fifty millions of the Russo-Greek orthodox Christians, and numerous divisions who belong to the United Greek Church. Except in Russia, where the Emperor is the head of the national religion, their lot has always been either miserable or but slightly modified by professed, but most tyrannical, toleration. During many long years their persecution by the Roman Catholics was so intolerable, that the Servians, and other adjacent Slavonic tribes, even preferred submission to the Turkish rule, to suffering the interminable wrongs which the vindictive spirit of Italian and German bigotry heaped upon them, and which, indeed, were severely aggravated on the outburst of the Protestant Reformation (whose doctrines found their way into these remote parts), fiercely awakening the fears, and sharpening the swords of the Roman hierarchy. Time indeed lessened the extent and cruelty of these oppressions ; but to the present day the Roman Catholic bearing of Austria towards its Greek Christian subjects in Croatia, Bosnia, and Hungary, where a fifth of the people, upwards of two millions, adhere to that persuasion, the Magyars, of Tartar origin, constituting nearly three-fifths,\* is by no means consistent with impartial rule or

\* The other fifth of the Hungarian population is of a miscellaneous nature—Goths, Germans, Jews, gypsies, etc.

a just regard to the principles of civil and religious liberty.

A brief historical retrospect will lead us readily to the present crisis and its prospects. Nine hundred or a thousand years ago, the Slavonic race invaded Europe, and settled throughout the region where their descendants are found, either nearly separated or mingled with other races, Aborigines, Tartar, and Goth. Thus Russia and Poland received their share, but the great proportion occupied the territories, frequently changing names, as Massia, Sclavonia, Illyricum, Pannonia, Croatia, all of which were conquered by, overwhelming Islam, four centuries ago. Subjected to the unsparring tyranny of the Turk, it is wonderful that one spark of a spirit of nationality, coupled with devotion to a persecuted religion, should have been cherished and remain to be lighted into a living and wide-spreading flame in the nineteenth century! In looking for natural causes, the mountainous character of Servia and Croatia may be taken largely into account, as in other parts of the world, for keeping up a spirit of independence. Add to "the mountain and the flood" the further protection of the impervious overspreading forests, and you have haunts for the sons of independence in the utmost perfection. And, fortified by these, the Servians maintained a chronic measure of nationality, whilst the Raja, or unarmed peasantry of the low country, were obliged to submit to Turkish slavery; except when occasionally roused and led to insurrection by some rebellion of highland chiefs.

These chiefs were simply Reavers, something of the "Rob Roy" class, and passed half the year in their fastnesses, only descending to the cultivated world for collecting their revenue and transacting their commerce. They were the Heyducs, *i.e.*, "Robbers," or, in more quiet times, the Waiwodes, or Knes; and their force consisted of related families, Momkes, or armed adherents belonging to the clan, and paid Bekjares or regular soldiers. On all public occasions, such as meetings of rival leaders, assemblages of legislative bodies, or political congresses, they made their appearance with a portentous suite of from fifty to a thousand warriors, armed to the teeth, and ready for the fray in whatever way might be required—murder, pillage, or slaughter. Faithful to their Heyducs, they asked no questions, but were both ready and willing to fight against other Heyducs, or Pashas, or Spahis, or Agas, or Dahis, or Janissaries, or whoever happened at the time to be the obnoxious paramount oppressor of the country. It should be observed, that so desperate was their condition, the Raja, or peasantry, often rose on their own account, and, choosing some famed popular character, placed him at the head of their revolt, and fought with noble heroism.

Though my sketch has used the single name of Servia, owing to its past history, position, and prominence, so fitly the type of Slavonic and Greek Christianity, it must be observed that my argument includes the cognate peoples and church in the surrounding provinces, whether under Ottoman, Austrian, or Russian autonomy; and that autonomy varying in every quarter, from severity to indifference or partial intermeddling. Thus we find in Hungary, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Transylvania, Croatia, Dalmatia, Selavonia, Herzegovina,\* millions of the same race and religion, mostly im-

bued with the same spirit and desire for homogeneity. The ruling passion is for emancipation; and, whether prostrate aliens as in Austrian and Turkish Croatia, or in the Hungarian shores of the Adriatic, or in the most western Ottoman Pashalik of Bosnia, there exists an ambitious desire of independence, which, in the course of events, must ere long be satisfied.

But I am happy to take my leave of the stupendous intricacy of "the Eastern Question," and ask the reader to return along with me into Servia.

The priests of the Greek church in Servia, generally, are poorly endowed, many very ignorant, and the whole class, though out of all proportion numerous, destitute of the influence and authority which ought to pertain to the chosen teachers of their fellow-men.

Many of their superstitions and ceremonies are peculiar. We have a very interesting account of them (and of Servia in all other respects) in a volume admirably translated from the German of Ranke by Mrs. Alexander Kerr, and of which two editions were published by Murray, about twenty years ago. Thus, at Whitsuntide (we are informed) they observe the festival of the Kralize, when from ten to fifteen virgins, one of whom personates the standard-bearer, another the king, and another the queen Kralize, veiled and attended by a maid of honour, pass through the village dancing and singing, and stopping in front of every house. The refrain of every song, celebrating courtships and marriage life, is Leljo, supposed to be the name of the ancient Sclavonian Cupid, or deity of love. The festival of Saint John, the longest day, has (as throughout Europe) other rites and sports, so symbolically important, that the sun is said to stand still thrice in reverence of them. It might, of course, be expected that Christmas time was attended by many acts in which superstition and devotion were strangely mingled. Thus, after the labours of the day are finished, on Christmas eve, the father of the family goes into the wood, and cuts down a straight oak sapling, which he brings into the house, with the salutation, "Good evening and happy Christmas!" To this all present answer, "God grant it to thee, thou happy one, rich in honour!" and cast corn over him. Then the tree, which is called Badujak, is placed upon the coals. In the morning, which is welcomed with the firing of pistols, a visitor, previously chosen for each house, arrives, and throws corn through the doorway from a glove, exclaiming, "Christ is born!" and some one in the house in return throws corn towards the visitor and answers, "In truth he is born!" On this another of the party advances, and, whilst with a poker he strikes the Badujak (still lying on the coals), and whilst scattering the sparks about, cries, "As many sparks, so many oxen, cows, horses, goats, sheep, swine, beehives; so much good fortune and happiness!" The housewife then envelops the visitor in a coverlet of the bed, and the remains of the Badujak are carried into the orchard. They do not go to church, but every one comes to the holiday repast, with a lighted wax taper. Holding these in their hands, they pray and kiss one another, repeating the words, "God's peace! Christ is in truth born! We adore Him!" To indicate a close union of every member of the house, the head of the family collects the yet burning tapers, and fastening them together, places them in a dish filled with the Tshesznitza and all sorts of grain, and thus extinguishes them. This Tshesznitza is an unleavened roll of the usual form, but, like the bean or ring in our Twelfth cake, has a piece of money kneaded into it; and when it is broken, he who finds the deposit in his piece of bread is expected to have, above all the others, a fortunate

\* I have not mentioned Wallachia and Moldavia, in which there is a curious Roman mixture of race with the native Dacians, who are not Sclavonians or Magyars, but whose position is already an almost completed great fact towards the dissolution of the Turkish empire in Europe.

year. The table is not cleared, nor the room swept, during three days; open house is kept for every comer until New Year's Day; the salutation continuing, "Christ is born!" and the reply, "In truth he is born!"

But of all these observances, the most curious to us appears to be their mode of praying for rain. Servia, exposed to a climate alternately extremely cold and extremely hot, frequently experiences the severity of protracted drought on the broad and fertile plains where flows its affluent river Morava. When such visitations occur, in order to propitiate the saints under whose control the weather is supposed to be,\* a maiden is divested of her garments, and so wrapped round with grass, herbs, and flowers that hardly any part, even of her face, can be seen. She is called the Dodolá; and in this state, like a walking bundle of grass, she goes from house to house, the housewife pours a pailful of water over her as a symbol, her companions chant a prayer for rain, and the people feel confident that their object will be speedily attained. It may here be noticed that, owing to the climate, the breeds of sheep, oxen, and horses are of an inferior kind; but the country possesses immense natural resources, to be developed as it advances in independence and (it is to be hoped) good government—a consummation in which every preceding successful revolt has signally failed. The vine is widely cultivated; but the habits of the peasants are reported to be temperate, and their indulgence in alcoholic stimulants rare; which, if true, is the more creditable to them in the presence of Slivovitz or Rakia, a spirituous liquor, distilled from plums, and costing about the price of a halfpenny the pint!

#### EPHEMERÆ OF THE PRESS.

THE abolition of the stamp and paper duty gave an immense stimulus to enterprise for newspaper publishing. In six months, twenty-three papers, of greater or lesser pretensions, were started in London alone. Of these, several met with a premature death; in fact, fell still-born from the press. During the year 1866, twenty-eight journals were brought out in the metropolis, five of which did not survive twelve months. In the provinces, during the same period, seventy new papers appeared, many of which became prematurely defunct.

The attempts made during the past half dozen years to establish daily newspapers in London have in most cases signally failed. Some speculative or sanguine people, not counting the cost or risk of so formidable a project, have rushed into the wild adventure, and discovered their error when bitterly bought experience was of no practical avail. Moved by the success of the "Daily Telegraph" and the "Morning Star," and the reduced "Standard," a speculating publisher brought out the "London Daily Journal." The proprietors of a weekly print of a similar title, which this publisher had not long before disposed of for a considerable amount, instituted an action in Chancery, and an injunction to restrain the issue of the "London Daily Journal" was granted; so that but three numbers were issued. The justice of this injunction is not very obvious; the adjective "Daily" marking a distinction quite as broadly as the many adjectives distinguishing the titles of "Weekly Times," "Christian Times," "Railway Times," from the great journal bearing the leading name.

About three years ago another equally abortive attempt

\* Elias, whose ascension has made him be here regarded as a sort of god of thunder, and called the Thunderer; Mary, the fiery sender of lightning; and Pantaleon, the ruler of tempests.

was made to establish a daily newspaper. It was called "The Iron Times," and was projected and edited by a journalist of some experience. After the lapse of a few weeks it died from want of capital to carry on the undertaking, the project having been commenced with very inadequate resources.

Although in newspaper circles one constantly heard of some new journalistic adventure, still no person was foolhardy enough to embark in a speculation attended with much preliminary outlay and perilous risk, until "The Day" dawned upon us, not many months since. It came out under high auspices, and with a signal flourish of trumpets. A celebrated and opulent nobleman was considered the proprietor; and fabulous sums of money were said to be forthcoming, if necessary, towards the establishment of that journal on a permanent basis. But this advocate of "Constitutional Liberalism" survived but nine-and-twenty days. A few thousand pounds were thrown away upon the enterprise; and its manager and editor had to seek refuge from troublesome creditors in that *refugium peccatorum*, the Bankruptcy Court! Then were revealed secrets for which the public was not prepared. The disclosure was made that certain noble lords had extended monetary advances to the bankrupt, with the view of carrying out his design, but most emphatically repudiating any further responsibility. If the project succeeded, the money thus advanced was to be repaid in a year; should the speculation prove a failure, it was to be considered as a gift. Notwithstanding such arrangements, these noblemen acted most generously and honourably; and, because their names had been mixed up with the concern, undertook whatever pecuniary responsibilities remained still attached to the unsuccessful journal which appeared under their auspices.

Nothing daunted by this signal failure, a popular author shortly afterwards made an attempt to establish an evening newspaper. Its half comical title, appearance, and arrangement attracted some attention, but the seeds of death developed in it early. The "Little Times" expired after the brief existence of twenty-one days.

The advent of what is commonly called "the cheap press" has been productive of singular effects. Old and influential party organs have frequently perished soon after the appearance of a "penny paper" in the same locality, while in some instances the very journals that wrought this effect either ceased to exist, or became submerged into clap-trap representatives of narrow and unimportant cliques, some even becoming the property of private speculators for advertising purposes.

This revolution has not been confined specially to the provinces. The metropolis also has been the theatre of its operations. The "Morning Chronicle," long the successful rival of the "Times," and its superior in literary renown, and once a better property, after passing through sundry and inconstant phases, had to succumb. For a time it was kept breathing by the restorative of French gold; but, when this elixir was withdrawn, it rapidly sank into irrecoverable debility, and died of sheer inanition.

If we were to extend our observations to magazines, and other periodicals not newspapers, the statistics of mortality are frightful. Certainly "the more the merrier" for authors and artists—for printers and dealers; also for papermakers as long as their bills are paid, or as long as the spare stock lasts which they may contribute to the venture. But the scores of defunct periodicals, the registry of whose birth and death may be read at Stationers' Hall, prove that experience in publishing, as in other things, is rarely gained at the cost of predecessors.